



PRESS RELEASE

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Ambassador Mitchell and Assistant Secretary Barton Visit Kayah State

Yangon, (March 21, 2013) – U.S. Ambassador Derek Mitchell and Assistant Secretary of State for Conflict and Stabilization Operations Rick Barton visited Loikaw, Kayah State on March 20 and met with a broad range of government officials, ethnic leaders, members of civil society, and students.

In a meeting with the Chief Minister of Kayah State, the delegation discussed the peace process, the development needs of Kayah State, and assistance for landmine victims. The delegation then met with ethnic leaders and discussed achieving genuine peace and development through dialogue and U.S. assistance in creating workshops to discuss assistance to landmine victims.

At a prosthetic workshop, Ambassador Mitchell and Assistant Secretary Barton witnessed the work that landmine assistance organizations are doing in Kayah State. The delegation then had a robust exchange with a diverse range of civil society representatives, who noted improved freedom of movement and emphasized the need to strengthen the education system.

The delegation also toured the Kayah State Cultural Museum and held a roundtable discussion with students at the University of Loikaw.

Upon returning to Yangon, Ambassador Mitchell said, “I had a very productive visit to Kayah State today. It was my first visit, and I come back encouraged by the commitment of government and civic leaders to collectively build a peaceful and prosperous future for Kayah State.” Assistant Secretary Barton added, “I was pleased to see the enthusiasm for further landmine education and victim assistance efforts and was moved to see the great work already being done by groups like the Karenni Health Workers Organization at their prosthetic workshop.”

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